Table of Contents

1. Chapter 1
2. Chapter 2
3. Chapter 3
4. Chapter 4
5. Chapter 5
6. Chapter 6
7. Chapter 7
8. Chapter 8
9. Chapter 9
10. Chapter 10
11. Chapter 11
12. Chapter 12
13. Chapter 13
14. Chapter 14
15. Chapter 15
16. Chapter 16
17. Chapter 17

Chapter 1

Staring at the red eviction notice Naruto felt helpless as he crushed the paper. He tossed it away as he moved to the small dining table and looked at the crumpled newspaper ad he had torn out. He was skeptical about the authenticity but he was willing to try anything. His boss was being an extra hardass, withholding his pay because he wanted sexual advances and the same when it came to his landlord. He had no money to seek justice and if Naruto was truly unlucky by writing back to the person in the ad then he would finally accept the words of his high school bullies.

That he was a cursed omega.

He wrote a letter on a plain piece of paper, the advertisement asked for a photograph as well so Naruto slipped on into the envelope before he rushed to the post office to get it sent. With that being said he headed back to his apartment to prepare for living in a boarding house since he was in the red when it came to money. It was the 1990s things like credit didn't matter if the spouse was married to an upstanding person. As he packed up his belongings he felt dread in his body as he listened to the thin walls. The Landlord was making a fuss and while Naruto wasn't the only omega he harrassed it was disgusting to know that they couldn't do anything about it. He often wondered what kind of person grew into that sort of monster.

What went wrong in the mother's head that corrupted the poor bastard to leer and grab after his lesser? "Just ignore it, ignore it Naruto."

In the next few days on the other side of Japan specifically Kurume Rural City that Shikamaru received his mail that day. He turned over the envelope curiously as he hadn't received mail in a long time. He heard the crying of his baby and headed back into the house to look after him. The house felt like it was on fire. There was a mess everywhere as he was drowning in the stress of a newborn. He often cursed at having been duped by his ex-wife. He wasn't

even back for a year before she sprung the news on him.

"I'm leaving," She told him one night a few months after he had returned. "I can't handle being a military spouse."

The only good thing that came about was that the military offered fast-tracked divorce otherwise he would have to drag everything out. She gave up custody easily, he had asked her why and her response made him angry.

"I never wanted children, it was only due to your insistence that I got pregnant," She shrugged as she handed over the gurgling baby. "I tend to have ease when detaching from others a child is no different."

He needed to find a wife but traditional routes had betrayed him. He met Temari at a socialite party for military men to meet high-class ladies. They had an icy start but he had thought they warmed up to each other. He had obviously judged wrong so while he bottle-fed his son he opened the only response to his ad. The photo slid out before the letter and he was immediately star-struck. The person in the photo was beautiful but you could tell by their eyes that they had been through a lot and he found out by reading the letter. The handwriting was swift and neat and it seemed to lean 30 degrees on the page.

'An orphan,' He mused mentally as he read what was basically a resume. He knew the orphanages raised omegas to be prime for marriage and it would seem Naruto Uzumaki was no exception. He laid all his assets on the table and seeing this now made Shikamaru feel foolish for ever partnering with Temari because what Naruto was offering Temari didn't do as an omega. Which made him wonder why it was always the ones who were down in the trenches that make perfect wives? It would seem being born in the upper echelon of society had jaded his ex-wife into thinking she was a trophy wife or something of the like. He was displeased and now looking at the letter and photo he felt content to buy the blonde a train ticket so he could get the process moving.

He called the newspaper agency and let them know they can stop running the ad as he had gotten what he desired. Next after putting

Shikadai to sleep he penned his own letter in response to the blonde including a photo of himself and Shikadai. He didn't hold back on the details. If Naruto was going to back out then he needed to back out knowing the full situation. Shikamaru was a military man, he was of integrity. He posted his message the same day and went home to wait for another response.

In the advertisement, he outlined what he wanted.

A simple male omega who was willing to be wed at the earliest convenience. Since Shikamaru was 31 he wanted an omega between 24 to 27. Naruto was 25. The male omega must be skilled in homemaking and be willing to tend to a small farm. They have to be okay with Shikamaru being of a military standing and be expected to attend formal events with him. He does clarify that he does intend to pursue a romance with the omega in question.

Naruto received his letter a few days later as well, dodging his landlord as he packed his two trunks, the only sentimental items he had was his clothes. He tore open the letter and he smiled a bit as he saw the two photos that fell out. 'Well he's certainly handsome,' Naruto noted as he looked at Shikamaru in his military attire. The next picture was of a happy baby and he guessed he'll know his name soon enough as he read the letter. The more he read the more he frowned. He went through waves of emotions but he was more than qualified to handle what Shikamaru required. Included in the letter was an address and Naruto responded with a time and date. He had planned to meet Shikamaru at the train station. It was time he stopped delaying. He needed to get out of here.

When Shikamaru had gotten the second response it was only a day before Naruto would show up. He looked at his messy home and felt embarrassed since he was a part of the army. But he was handling a newborn. Could you blame him? He settled Shikadai down and did a deep clean of his entire home, he didn't want to leave a bad impression on the blonde who would be staying with him for the foreseeable future. Spending the whole day cleaning made him realize that he didn't clean out all of Temari's items from the home. A bitter taste was left in his mouth as he made sure to go from the attic to the basement to ensure nothing of Subaku remained in his home. He hadn't realized when he downsized from

the old home that he carried some of Temari's luggage with him. He tossed it right out as he was starting fresh.

He washed and changed the curtains, and change the bedding, in both the master and guest bedroom. Cleaned the entire kitchen out of stale food and mopped the floors. He even changed and washed the kotatsu blanket. He decided to go shopping in the afternoon to stock up on the fridge and Shikadai's baby food. The day was well spent and at the end of the night, Shikamaru looked around at his clean home and smiled.

He was ready.

Chapter 2

Hopping off the train with two heavy trunks was surreal for Naruto. He was out of the city. He was never going back, he couldn't the last of his funds was spent on the train ticket to get there. He sighed as the train head headed off further up the rural part. He walked to an overhanging area to smooth out his outfit and wipe off his heeled boots. He didn't see anyone else at the station granted it was 6 in the morning. Naruto left under the cover of night as he wanted to avoid the landlord.

He didn't regret it.

He pulled out a book and sat beside his luggage and began to wait. The sun rose and the day began and Naruto noted that it was a peaceful area. The people he had walked past wished him good morning and Naruto had done the same. He was deep in his book when around 8:30 he heard someone call his name. He stiffened a bit before looking up to see the man in the photo, a baby held in his arms. A smile overtook his face as he tossed his book into his handbag before picking up his trunks and heading over to him.

Shikamaru walked onto the platform expecting Naruto but also expecting to be trolled. To be led on so he was surprised to see the same blonde as in the photo. He looked even more beautiful in real life and he was within reach. His golden hair reached around his waist and looked well cared for, pulled into a low ponytail and curled. He seemed deeply concentrated on the novel he was reading, his pursued pink lips and adorable whisker marks led him in. He was of a smaller frame obviously, his body was exquisitely proportioned. When he called out for the blonde he noted as he got up that his posture was straight, this omega was disciplined. His figure was curved in an exotic way. He was happy with this turnaround.

The trunks looked heavy but the blonde walked over with ease, his outfit simple but alluring.

[image]

His black heeled boots were polished, and Shikamaru was pleased with the small touch. "Hello, I suppose this is Shikadai?" Naruto smiled at the baby who was sleeping contently. "He's far more adorable now that I see him.

"Let me carry your luggage," Shikamaru reached out to take one while he offered Shikadai and the blonde naturally fell in line. As they walked off the platform Shikamaru felt light which was weird since Naruto's luggage was unusually heavy for just clothing items.

"He's so cute," Naruto murmured as he used one of his fingers to stroke the baby's cheek. "I know this is an unusual situation but I feel confident about this."

"You're optimistic it would seem," Shikamaru looked down at the omega who giggled. It was adorable and though he promised himself that he would go slow he found himself in a love-at-first-sight situation. So when he leaned down to kiss the omega he was surprised and pleased Naruto reciprocated. It was gentle in nature and Shikamaru got a taste of the cherry lipgloss Naruto was wearing. Pulling back he enjoyed the picture he saw. His blushing bride to be smiling while holding their son. If he was ever skeptical about the situation he set up for himself then all of it was washed away with that picture. "I'm sorry."

"You have nothing to apologize for. Shikamaru I'm all in, while this marriage is of convenience I do want to grow to love you and I hope you can do the same with me," Uzumaki's voice was soft, his eyes holding nothing but truth to them. Shikamaru felt the limp heartstrings being tugged on a little.

"I do want to love you as well. I'm glad you have such an open mind," Shikamaru expressed his relief. "I thought you were weirded out by the method of reaching out and at some point during waiting I thought you had given me false hope."

"While the method was a bit unusual, the common thing now is to attend format parties, mixers, or meet in bars and pubs. Workplaces are another aspect as well to meeting partners," Naruto was rocking

Shikadai unconsciously as he spoke, keeping his voice soft so as to not disturb the infant while they walked up a slight hill to reach Shikamaru's home.

"Do you have any previous relationships?" The alpha asked and he watched as amusement painted across the blonde's face.

"No, you're the first," It was admitted without shame nor did Naruto blush and look away in embarrassment. What was there to be ashamed of? Many people now desired virgin omegas. Shikamaru wasn't any different. "There isn't a problem is there?"

"Not at all but I'm curious as to why you would choose to marry a single father," He muttered. "Surely there were other options. Single military men if that was your type or perhaps a crush at work."

"I was too busy to seek relationships," Naruto waved off the comment. "Status doesn't influence me, being a single father isn't a black stain on your reputation. You are well established and you wanted a wife. I fit the requirements so I sent a letter. It's as simple as that Shikamaru."

"Was leaving behind your former life difficult?"

"Not in the slightest," The reply was quick. "Today is my eviction, the slumlord should be beating the door down at this moment. As for my job, the boss wasn't handing over my wages unless I gave him a little treat. I will not miss my former life. Being an orphan has benefits but I've always been family-oriented. Your ad was an answer to be prayers."

They had stopped at the front gate and were looking at each other.

"You're certainly a bride of many layers. You've intrigued me."

"I only aim to please my alpha."

They shared a laugh before entering the gate. A stone path led to the traditional Japanese home, indicative of the rural area that Naruto had now moved to.

[image]

Shikamaru unlocked the door and Naruto untied his boots and they both made their way inside. Shikamaru showed him every room and settled his luggage in the master bedroom. "You don't mind sharing a bed do you?"

"Not at all, though far warning I do tend to cling to things in my sleep," Naruto walked into the room and opened the large closet that only held Shikamaru's military uniforms, suits, and a gun safe. He nodded as he looked over at the dresser which he was sure held Shikamaru's casual clothing. "I can't wait to unpack. For now, however, I need to get lunch ready."

Naruto handed over Shikadai before bending down to take out a spotless white apron before making his way into the kitchen. "Do you have any preference? Allergies?"

"No preference and I don't have allergies," Shikamaru was a bit surprised at his ability to shift from one topic to the next. Naruto spent time examining his kitchen, figuring out where things were before he got pots steaming as he steamed crabs and prepared a seafood boil. Shikamaru opened the side doors that showed a view of the front wall and their vegetable garden with only a single green tree. On the ledge sat a multipurpose short table. He sat on one side of the table while tending to his baby who had woken up. The air felt domestic.

Naruto cooks and Shikamaru tend to their baby.

Chapter 3

Shikamaru was in love with Naruto's cooking. Pulling out crab legs has never been such an experience. The sauce was incredibly buttery but had the right amount of spice to go with it. He had never had such a fulfilling meal before. Naruto kneeled across from him, eating as well while Shikadai was asleep on her chest. The crab meat was soft and the satisfying cracking made it all worth it as they dipped it into the same bowl for sauce. "I hope you like it."

"Are you joking?" Shikamaru looked up at the omega who was wiping his mouth clean, his lips were turning red from the spice. "It's delicious Naruto."

"Thanks, Shika."

The nickname was new but welcomed and Shikamaru already had his in mind but wouldn't say it at the moment since Naruto was distracted with Shikadai getting used to his scent. In a sense, Shikamaru was glad Shikadai was this young and that Naruto was here as a mother figure for their son. A mother figure was essential for the first few years as the comforting scent that motherly omega gave off made the child feel at peace.

He knew without a doubt that the reason Shikadai was so fussy was because of the lack of a motherly figure nearby. He could feel it rolling off Naruto from the moment he got Shikadai in his arms and now the baby was just like Shikamaru again. Calm with observant eyes. Without a motherly figure nearby it placed stress on the baby. It was one of the reasons why he despised Temari for leaving. How could she do this to his son?! She knew the dangers but did it anyway. He found himself sighing and Naruto looked up at him with a knowing smile.

"I'm here now. Just relax, Shikadai's going to be fine," He cradled the back of the baby's head as he was smacking his lips in his sleep.

"Thank you, Naruto."

After lunch, they spent the day in the Master bedroom talking, getting to know each other as Naruto packed out his clothing. Shikamaru noted that her ornaments looked chipped and cracked but the fact he handled them with care showed that they were the only pieces of his life that he could hold onto as he was moved around by the system. They were cute fox figures and Shikamaru could make the connection to the blonde's whiskers. When Naruto had finished emptying his trunks he took them down to the basement and came back up to jump into bed. The dress rode up a bit to expose his tanned, clean thighs as the blonde turned on his side to face Shikamaru who was already looking at him.

"Well I'm here, when are we gonna get married?" He asked with a small smile. Shikamaru kissed his forehead as he rested Shikadai between them.

"It all depends on you. At first, I wanted to marry you as soon as you were here, I still do but I want your input."

"Let's get married, I can't buy you a ring-"

"Naruto I know the responsibilities. When I asked to be wed to you I knew that came with taking care of you financially and physically," He brushed his hair away from those clear blue eyes. "You can pick your ring, hell you can pick mine as well."

"You're really careless with this whole wedding thing," Naruto commented.

"I tried once to be accommodating," Shikamaru looked past the blonde to a far away place. "Look where it got me. I was told I needed to loosen up but in all honesty, while I can be loose on some things others I cannot. My ex-wife was not a simple omega, she wasn't a homemaker and she didn't want to move to the rural area with me. She was a socialite, she was lazy and entitled. When I decided to try again I now had to accommodate my son and finally include my feelings. I went the opposite and asked for what I wanted with that ad. I wanted a simple male omega, one of modesty and a homemaker who was willing to tend to a small farm."

"And I answered the call because it was everything I wanted," Naruto closed his eyes as he grinned. "While a weird scenario I'm happy we're going on this journey together. We have a long way to go but this is a start. I don't have anyone to bring to the wedding so apologies in advance."

"It's okay, I'll bring you into town so you can meet my friends."

"You don't have to do that, I don't want to be intrusive."

"You aren't you need to know them because they'll be around soon. You'll love them, some are rambunctious, others are quiet but they are supportive," Shikamaru vouched for them and Naruto finally agreed and nodded to meet his friends. "Maybe we should go tonight."

"Wait what?!"

Shikamaru had sat up in the bed to look over at the blonde who was still dressed in the outfit he came in. "You can even wear those clothes."

"No, I can't! This is just a train outfit," Naruto bolted from the bed and opened the closet as he started sifting through his outfits. "These are your friends, they have to approve so I need to wear something casual while also showing that I'm not just some floozy."

"You're blowing it way out of proportion," Shikamaru was laughing. "They're really casual and as long as you're polite they'd welcome you."

Naruto stopped and turned to him. "Are you sure?"

"Naruto I'm positive so calm down and wash up and pick out a cute outfit. Tonight is our weekly barbeque night at the restaurant my friend owns with his wife who is also my friend. Childhood sweethearts and all that."

"That's so sweet," Naruto looked in the closet with a meaningful stare. "When Shikadai and our future children grow up will we get to tell them how we met?"

Shikamaru looked down at his baby boy that was curling his tiny fists in the sheets. "Yeah, I'll tell them."

Naruto headed to the bathroom with a towel and undergarments. Shikamaru heard the shower running and he headed to Shikadai's room to change his diapers and pack a baby bag while changing his blue onesie to a light green one. It was jarring for Shikamaru to realize that Shikadai hadn't cried once since Naruto first held him. Shikadai had powerful lungs and could scream and cry for hours on end. Now, he was quiet, just darting his little eyes around the room. When he headed back into the bedroom Naruto was partially naked as he was in the middle of pulling his shirt down. While Shikamaru considered himself a respectable man this was his future wife, he could stare at all his wants and he was taken in by Naruto's breasts. They weren't sagging, the bra itself was of good quality as Naruto did have much on top, it was a perfect handful for him.

Naruto cleared his throat and Shikamaru snapped out of his daze to smirk slightly at Naruto's blushing face. When the blonde took the baby from him he was slightly jealous that his son got those as his pillows but he was pacified by Naruto also pulling him down to rest on his left breast. "Am I going to be marrying such a jealous father?" It was said in humor and Shikamaru laughed, resting his arms around the blonde's cinched waist.

"No but it's close," He responded by kissing his cheek and ushering them out of the house as it was around 4 PM.

Chapter 4

Walking into the city from their home took 15 minutes, it was a really good spot to live, right in the countryside while also being able to head into the city at a moment's notice. Shikamaru while still being active military was based in a financing job for the time being until he was deployed again. Naruto didn't know how he would deal with Shikamaru being away for months at a time but there was some program to explain it all to him. On the way to the restaurant, they passed a jewelry store and Shikamaru paused in his step before pulling Naruto inside the store.

Naruto almost wanted to look at Shikamaru in disbelief as they toured the several rings but oddly enough he did find one he fell in love with. It was a heavy sapphire stone with diamonds surrounding it. He stared at it for a long moment and Shikamaru smiled as he asked the salesperson to take it out. "Wait Shika that's expensive," Naruto protested as he turned to look up at the alpha who was still wearing a grin. "You can't get me that."

"I can and I will. Besides, you obviously like it but personally, I think your eyes put the stone to shame," Shikamaru took the ring from the salesperson who could only remain mute as the Nara slid the ring on Naruto's finger, it was a perfect fit. "I'll take it."

"At least let me pick your ring," The blonde was blushing as he tried to pull his hand back but Shikamaru wouldn't let go as he lowered to one knee. "Shikamaru stop it you're making me cry," His eyes were watering as he held up Shikadai with his free hand.

"Will you marry me? My Letter Bride?" He asked the blonde who was now crying. He nodded to Shikamaru's question and the applause from the salesperson made him aware that Shikamaru had done this in a store full of people. He accepted Shikamaru's kiss, smiling on their joined lips before they pulled back. Naruto strolled the line of rings for alphas and came across one he especially liked.

"Do you like this one?" Naruto pointed it out and Shikamaru smiled

and nodded. The blonde had the pleasure to slip it on his finger. It was a hand-crafted ring, with designs etched into the band. It was lowkey in color which seemed to be Shikamaru's style.

Shikamaru paid for the rings easily. Naruto was a bit stunned but he put it aside as he was reminded of Shikamaru's two careers. He couldn't stop staring at his ring, this was possibly the most expensive item he's ever had in his life. He wanted to cry all over again but he was in public so he settled for letting it out when he was home. The restaurant had a closed sign but Shikamaru just slid the door open and entered. Chatting could be heard as he helped Naruto unzip his boots.

Shikamaru approached them first, telling Naruto to hang behind while he talked to them first.

"Shikamaru! You made it," Choji yelled as he was walking out of the kitchen with a tray of meat. "Where's Shikadai? You know Inojin and ChoCho want their playmate."

Ino, Choji's wife came out of the kitchen next with a tray of drinks as their friends shuffled around, placing their children in the crib as well. Shikamaru chuckled as he grabbed an extra chair and brought it beside his regular chair. "That's the thing, remember when I told you I placed an ad for a bride?"

They all groaned.

"Shikamaru please tell me you haven't gone insane. You know what don't answer that, who was crazy enough to answer your request?" Sakura wanted to laugh but it died on her tongue when Naruto peeked around from the corner. This left the group stunned as the blonde waved nervously.

"I answered, I'm Naruto," His voice was so soft and when Shikamaru took his hand he followed his lead and revealed himself, holding Shikadai.

"He's beautiful isn't he?" Shikamaru caressed the blonde's cheek and under the gaze of so many new people made Naruto flustered.

"Naruto this is Ino and Choji, they own this restaurant and those are their fraternal twins Inojin and ChoCho. This is Sasuke and Sakura. Sakura is a doctor while Sasuke is a remote software developer. Their kid is the one with black hair named Sarada. That's Kiba and Hinata she's a professional farmer while Kiba is a veterinarian. They own the kid with the purple hair, she's Himawari. And finally, you have couples with no children. Neji and Shino, looking to adopt soon and then you have TenTen and Lee, martial arts experts who own a dojo with Neji."

Naruto was slient for a moment as he processed the information dump before bowing respectfully. "Nice to meet all of you!" His grin was infectious and soon Naruto was welcomed into the fold as Shikamaru took Shikadai and placed him in the shared crib. He immediately found reliability with Hinata and Ino, their shared love of fashion and food shining through. Naruto made sure to make mental notes about all the new faces he was seeing as they got talking about several topics.

"Naruto is honest why did you answer?" Hinata asked as she was on the other side of the male omega.

"Well it came at the right time I guess," Naruto smiled. "My lease was ending and the clerk position I held was becoming toxic. Shikamaru was a blessing."

"So you've always wanted to be a homemaker?" Sakura seemed surprised as Naruto nodded.

"I'm impressed, usually omegas nowadays are fighting to be in the workplace," Lee seemed upset about it.

"Really? I wanted to leave, the orphanage taught us everything in order to be marriageable. I always felt that was my purpose."

Shikamaru was worried Naruto would feel offended but the blonde accepted his stance on the subject while taking care to not bash the omegas that wanted to go down that path. "Omegas like you are rare nowadays. Guess Shikamaru did have luck growing up," Shino spoke up.

The Nara wore a shit-eating grin as they started grilling meat and sharing rice and other side dishes. The night was wonderful, Naruto and Neji ended up in a friendly debate that included politics and this is what made Shikamaru smile. Neji and Naruto came from completely different backgrounds but were so similar. They were both orphans but while Naruto knew he had no one Neji had his uncle which was Hinata's father but the man was dismissive of him. Neji was all for omegas being independent while Naruto preferred depending on an alpha. They compared and tore into politics and their stupid rules and they laughed with each other. It was safe to say that Ino, Hinata, and Neji were the ones Naruto bonded with by the time it came for them to leave. They cleaned up the area and grabbed their children as they all walked back to their homes since they all lived in the rural area. Naruto and Shikamaru were the first to break off since they were the closest and after wishing the group good night they entered their home.

Ino was smiling as she held her husband's hand. "Thoughts on Naruto?"

"He's certainly too good for Shikamaru," TenTen chuckled. "He's an amazing omega, in fact, he doesn't strike me as the type to be into homemaking."

"Did you see how much he loved being around the children? What surprised me is the fact that they loved him too," Sakura looked at Sadara who was sleeping on Sasuke's shoulder. "Shikadai was restless in my hold today but he settled right down when he was passed to Naruto."

"You can tell Shikamaru is smitten with Naruto, he couldn't take his eyes off him," Kiba was excited for his alpha brother.

"He deserves it, Temari just left him in the breeze. They could have gone for separation but she endangered Shikadai," Neji wore an expression of disgust. "The ad thing was a moment of madness but it worked so he's happy he found someone like Naruto."

"Yeah Naruto fits the description Shikamaru said he always wanted in an omega back in school," Choji mumbled. "A modest omega."

Chapter 5

A baby's giggling could be heard as Naruto tended to their garden. He had slipped in the wet mud and Shikadai being in his rocker by the ledge couldn't help but laugh at him. "Laugh all you want you little mushroom, I'm crushing these vegetables in your applesauce," Naruto threatened as he turned off the hose after washing off the tools and setting them to dry. He slipped on his ring as he took Shikadai from the rocker to move to the crib so he could take a shower and start on dinner.

While in the shower Naruto was thinking about a lot of things. It's been two months and they have settled into a routine that was fitting for both of them. Naruto was a housewife and mother while Shikamaru was the breadwinner. They didn't wed yet but it was close. Shikamaru wanted a small ceremony with their friends, when asking about his parents Shikamaru was quiet before admitting that his parents were not in the picture.

They weren't fond of him losing Temari. They didn't believe in divorce, marriage is all about compromise and all that fun stuff. Naruto understood the situation and asked if Shikamaru wanted to talk about it deeper. The Nara wasn't keen on that aspect so they both dropped it in favor of building their new life.

He hopped out of the shower and filled the small bucket with fresh lukewarm water before drying off and changing into a fresh outfit for getting around the house.

He carried the bucket to Shikadai's room and poured it into the small baby bath that was on his dresser. Naruto changed his diaper before washing him off in the bath, drying him off, and putting him in a red onesie. "Nice and clean, look at my sweet baby," Naruto cooed as he bounced Shikadai, walking towards the kitchen and placing him in his playpen. He was starting to crawl around and Naruto didn't want any accidents while he was cooking.

He pressed kisses to the baby's cheeks and forehead, giggling with Shikadai who was babbling with him. He got up and walked over to the stove to start his pot of boiling water. He was making red bean stew with rice and a salad on the side. He walked over to the television and angled it in a way so Shikadai could see it and started to play cartoons. It was nice background fodder to keep Shikadai distracted as he cranked up the heat and plugged in the rice cooker.

As the water began to a rapid boil Naruto dumped the peas in and added his seasonings before covering it back up. He chopped up his onions, garlic, and ginger. He set these aside and started on the rice and cutting up ingredients for the salad. As the rice was going he checked in on the peas and tested to make sure they were soft before throwing away the dark red water and setting it up with fresh water while adding the chopped ingredients with powered seasonings and letting it simmer.

He heard Shikadai hitting the cage with his rattle while gurgling urgently. Naruto wore a fond smile as he grabbed the thermos on the counter and found a small baby bowl. He poured out cinnamon porridge and proceeded to sweeten it heavily before grabbing Shikadai and beginning to feed him the meal. He was an obedient baby and Naruto wanted their future children to be the same. "I can't wait to give you siblings. I know you'll make a perfect big brother," The blonde kissed Shikadai's forehead.

Shikadai giggled tugging at Naruto's clothing as he finished his porridge and was placed onto his fluffy play mat. He stuck his thumb in his mouth and rolled onto his belly to bunker down. Naruto turned off the television as he watched his baby go to sleep. He finished up cooking just in time as Shikamaru slid the front door open. Naruto smiled as Shikamaru came through the door with an exhausted expression. "Welcome home, go wash up and sit for dinner."

Shikamaru kissed Naruto's forehead, holding his waist as he took in the blonde's peach scent. "You okay?" Naruto looked up at him with concern. "You seem extra tired."

"This is how I look before the new load of work hits me," Shikamaru

smiled. "I'll be tired in the upcoming days."

"Anything I can do to help you?"

"Just save me some hot water in the shower," Shikamaru pulled away as he went upstairs to get ready for dinner. Naruto entertained himself while he waited by cleaning up the kitchen and covering Shikadai in a warm blanket. When Shikamaru came back down they ate together while Naruto listened to his day and provided advice as to how Shikamaru could've gone about things better. It was helpful and by the end Shikamaru found himself being at peace with Shikadai sleeping on his chest while Naruto cleaned up the dishes they had just eaten from.

They headed upstairs and got Shikadai in the crib and turned on the baby monitor before heading to their bedroom to get ready for the night. Shikamaru seemed deep in thought but Naruto didn't want to distract him so he kept quiet, waiting for Shikamaru to speak up. Once he turned out the lights and got in bed Shikamaru turned his body to face the blonde. "We should get married soon."

"I know," Naruto placated as he chuckled.

"No, I'm serious. How's Saturday?"

Naruto's smile dimmed a little before he broke down into laughter. "Okay, we can do Saturday."

"Serious?" Shikamaru leaned over to touch nose with the blonde. "You can say no Naruto."

"I know but I'm happy that you're happy," Naruto chuckled. "I want to marry you silly."

Shikamaru kissed him, deepening the action when Naruto moaned softly. Their tongues were heated, slowly burning him up with passion as Naruto opened his legs Shikamaru got between them. Shikamaru cupped his cheeks as he pulled back, he was entranced by the blonde's flushed expression. He was so beautiful. "I love you, I love you so much."

Naruto smiled and returned Shikamaru's confession with his own.

Chapter 6

"This is Naruto, my bride."

Naruto wanted to hide but he was holding Shikadai who was sleeping peacefully. He gave a small wave. "Hello it's nice to meet you two finally," He spoke softly as he faced Shikamaru's father and mother. Their faces didn't give away their thoughts, perfectly blank and Naruto wondered if he was about to be thrown out or get hurled with abuse.

He shifted uncomfortably in his seat as he looked away to pay attention to Shikadai who was nursing a milk bottle while he slept. A skill the baby had developed and for a moment Naruto wished he was in Shikadai's space. Shikamaru was facing his parents head-on, he wanted to know their stance and if he should be ready to remove Naruto from a situation that could become potentially abusive. He knew they were disappointed with the Nara for not holding onto Temari and while he could understand he wasn't about to allow Temari to be around when she didn't want to be. How could he raise his son in that toxic environment?

"Your education?" Yoshino asked, her blank stare morphing into one of judgment, and Shikamaru was immediately disgusted with his mother. He wanted to speak up, to shut her up but Naruto wasn't ashamed of his background and he wouldn't be silenced if that was what Shikamaru was aiming for. Luckily for him, Shikamaru didn't have a desire to hide his background.

"I was raised by the orphanage," Naruto kept his voice leveled, his back straight as he faced Shikamaru's parents head-on. They bristled at the revelation.

"No," Shikaku growled.

Shikamaru got up as that was all he needed to hear. "We'll be heading out then," He took his son from Naruto's hands as the

blonde pulled on his boots.

His parents were shocked by this and got up to follow them out. "Are you serious?!" Yoshino yelled.

"Yes!" Shikamaru yelled back. "You two picked the last time and look where it landed me! I have a son whose mother ran off without a backward glance. I chose this time and I ended up with a proper bride. One who accepts my son from another omega. What more could I ever want now?"

Naruto was hiding behind Shikamaru's frame, his eyes becoming tender as the alpha defended him.

"He's an uneducated breeding machine," Shikaku's voice was gruff. "You should've headed back to the mixer for a proper omega and not this street rat."

Naruto felt bile rise in his throat before he bolted outside to vomit. He could hear screaming and yelling before Shikamaru came to get him and take them home. He was sobbing, he always wanted to be accepted by his future husband's family but his background had been judged and he wasn't wanted. He also felt guilty that Shikamaru had to yell and disown his parents. The drive back home was quiet, save for Naruto crying softly as it began to rain.

When they got back home Shikamaru reached over the console to pull Naruto into his chest as the blonde broke down fully. "I'm sorry," Naruto blubbered and Shikamaru felt anguish in his chest as he kissed his forehead.

"Don't you dare apologize," He growled lowly. "I am not ashamed of you and they crossed the line with their meager words."

"But-" He was cut off as Shikamaru kissed him softly.

"No words," Shikamaru murmured against his lips. "I won't allow you to be verbally abused. What kind of soon-to-be husband would I be? I respect you and your background. If I didn't want you I wouldn't have taken you."

Naruto nodded as they pulled away a bit Shikamaru cleaned his

cheeks of tears. "Thank you."

"You don't have to thank me, it's my responsibility," He smiled at the blonde whose eyes had gotten puffy.

They held hands as they allowed the rain to die down long enough for them to run out and into their home. Naruto immediately got Shikadai into a warm bath to prevent a cold from developing. The baby was comfortably sleeping in his crib before Naruto and Shikamaru took a bath together for the first time. It was awkward at first, bumping into each other and touches lingering with unspoken intention but they developed movements that complimented each other's bathroom habits Shikamaru was soaking in the bath as he watched Naruto wash off with the shower head. His body was beautiful, delicate with minimal scarring, Shikamaru's body, however, was war-hardened but he wasn't ashamed, he was happy someone with Naruto's demeanor would be happy laying beside him when they went to bed.

He wasn't a man of many words, nor did he get romantic ques well and there was also the problem of him being active military. He was the type to get suckered with omegas who had straying hearts and bodies but looking at the image of Naruto he knew for certain the blonde would never do this to him. That he had accepted everything Shikamaru came with and if Naruto chose to stay that meant Shikamaru wasn't unlovable as he thought he was. Temari had left some deep scars on him, emotional scars but here was Naruto bandaging the wounds without even knowing.

"What are you thinking about?" Naruto tapped his cheek to snap Shikamaru out of his deep thinking. He smiled at the blonde who had his legs pulled up to his chest.

How could he tell the blonde all the things he thought? He didn't know how to begin telling Naruto how much he appreciated him. So he settled for simple words. "Just thinking about how much I love you. Your support, your acceptance. You are a very precious being Naruto and I would be damned if I let anyone hurt you ever again."

Naruto gasped softly before breaking into a smile of his own. "I love

you too Shikamaru, I've never been so happy living with you and Shikadai. I'm happy you defended me at the cost of your parents being in your life. I would have understood if you had done nothing but I'm so happy you did speak up."

"I could never allow you to go through that. You are my omega, you are a part of my life from now on and perhaps forever if you allow it."

"I do."

Chapter 7

Naruto hummed softly as he fed Shikadai the next morning. It was still raining heavily but he had gotten the heater going to the home was toasty as he lulled the lazy baby to sleep. Shikamaru was the same, wanting to sleep in as the cold weather was pleasant, the sound of rain gently hitting the roof and window. It was a gentle peace Naruto never knew could exist. The bustling city life was far behind him now.

He never envisioned himself going to the rural side of Japan. Everything was within walking distance and friendly neighbors you could call on. He was enamored with it. Shikamaru was a quiet alpha, pushing and encouraging from the sidelines as he did things at his own pace. He liked the Nara a lot so far, he was a simple person. He was straightforward with his desires and didn't hesitate to let Naruto know about them.

Naruto loved it. He wasn't the best at reading the room and hated partners who acted as if he should know automatically what was going on in their heads. He didn't. That is why he loved when Shikamaru told him where his headspace was at. Let him know, Shikamaru let him know.

He placed Shikadai in his playpen on some soft cushions before starting the breakfast for the day. He was heading for something to warm them up since it was cold out. He settled for baking fresh garlic bread and light tomato soup. When he was done he headed back to their shared bedroom Shikamaru was on his back, tucked under the heavy blanket.

Naruto sat on his side of the bed and began coaxing Shikamaru awake. "C'mon Maru, I have breakfast waiting."

Shikamaru groaned softly and he turned on his side to face Naruto. He blinked softly at the blonde who was wearing a pout. "I don't want to move," Shikamaru snuggled back into the pillows. "Come to bed Naru, just come back. Bring Shikadai too, I want to hug my

babies."

Naruto blushed but nodded and got up. He placed breakfast on a tray and balanced it while carrying Shikadai in his other arm. Shikamaru was now sitting up and quickly took the heavy tray from his omega who climbed in bed with their baby. He took Shikadai after settling the tray between them and had breakfast.

"You're such a wonderful cook," Shikamaru praised as he dipped his bread in his bowl of soup. "It's so light and creamy and the toasted bread is a great touch for dipping."

"I'm glad you enjoy it Shika," Naruto beamed as he downed his bowl. They spent the morning huddled in bed talking about everything and nothing. They talked about weddings, both agreeing on wanting a small intimate ceremony.

"Have you ever tried looking for your parents?"

Naruto hummed sleepily. "I have, which orphan hasn't chased the leads left behind. We want to know," He seemed at peace. "Was I a mistake? Not enough funds to feed me? A product of incest? We all want to know what made up your mind to leave us to the government."

"And did you find them?"

Naruto was silent for a moment, his eyes closed before he slowly opened them. "I did. Their graves were covered in moss but they were buried side by side. Minato and Kushina Uzumaki."

Honestly, Shikamaru wasn't surprised they turned out to be dead. Many don't send male omegas off to be raised by the state. They were rare. "How did they die?"

"Car crash, I was the sole survivor," Naruto closed his eyes. "I was wanted, I was loved. A drunk took them away."

It felt raw, too real in the moment. Shikamaru leaned over and kissed his lips softly. "I do love you. Shikadai loves you. You are wanted Naruto, you're a part of our family."

"Thank you Shikamaru," Naruto turned on his side and fell asleep. He was spent on emotional talks for the day. Shikamaru let him go for the day. Taking the chance to bond with his baby. He washed the dishes and sat in Shikadai's playpen to read books to him. His child was just like him, same features and mannerisms when he was a baby. Intelligent eyes watched his every move as he scanned the words on the page.

He noted that Shikadai had lost the remainder of Temari's scent. Before Naruto had come into their lives, the scent of his former wife was still on Shikadai, lingering like a sick joke to torment Shikamaru. But now? He couldn't smell Temari. Shikadai was drowning in Naruto's motherly scent. It was soothing to smell that now, the bitterness he felt whenever he held Shikadai was gone now. Aided by Naruto helping them.

"I'm sorry, I failed you as a father there for a moment," Shikamaru murmured as he poked his son's cheeks softly. "I love you my little fawn."

Shikadai only gurgled a gummy smile spreading his cheeks into a chubby mochi. Shikamaru bit them playfully Shikadai burst into a fit of giggles. "I'm so happy you're at peace now," The father murmured as his son grabbed at him with chubby fingers. "I'm so happy," A few tears slipped out.

Babies needed a motherly scent to survive. Babies have cried themselves to death from omega mothers withholding their scent and affection. Shikamaru was almost certain his son would become another statistic if Naruto hadn't answered the call. He trembled in agony as he thought of Shikadai crying for days on end until his lungs collapsed.

How could he ever imagine buying a baby's coffin? He would never know because his baby was now happy and healthy. Soaking up all the parental love the two of them could give him.

"I need to thank Naruto."

Chapter 8

"Do we have to leave him?" Naruto was very reluctant to let go of Shikadai to Ino who gave Shikamaru a knowing look. "We're a family, we go everywhere together now," Naruto insisted.

Shikamaru sighed and took Shikadai to pass off to Choji before picking Naruto up and over his shoulders. "And we're off!"

"Wait!" Naruto protested. "My baby!"

Hearing that warmed Shikamaru's heart but they needed to start things. He had an entire day planned for them. Naruto pouted in the car but quickly brightened when he saw they were heading to the beach. His blonde hair was loose around his waist as he leaned out the window to catch the scent of the sea breeze. Naruto was in a strapless sundress of deep blue color with sakura branches. They got a nice spot on the sandy shores and Shikamaru put up a large umbrella and set out the blankets and the picnic.

Naruto kicked off his slippers and lifted his dress to sit on the blanket. Shikamaru watched him keenly, he was enthralled with the blonde's body as he laid down on the blanket, his smooth tanned thighs glistened in the sun and Shikamaru longed to hold him intimately. He didn't want to push too strongly with Naruto. He wanted to be a perfect husband. "Shika," Naruto reached out for him and pulled him down beside him. "Don't stand out in the sun without protection."

"I'll be fine, these conditions are nothing compared to military combat fields," Shikamaru nevertheless sat down beside his future wife who was content to watch the waves pick up as the sunrise. Naruto began humming as he unpacked their shared breakfast box. The blonde had packed a big stack as he was under the impression Shikamaru was going in for a long day but it turns out that it was for them, Shikamaru had taken the day off.

"We could've done this on the weekend," Naruto chuckled as he unboxed egg sandwiches, stacks of fluffy pancakes and chocolate sauce, sugar cookies and a thermos of coffee, and a thermos of cranberry juice.

"No," Shikamaru denied. "Everyone flocks here on the weekends, the weekdays are better because I want you to have a lot of view of the ocean."

Naruto blushed softly. "Thank you for taking me into consideration."

"You're my wife, of course, I take you into consideration," Shikamaru shrugged it off and they started in on breakfast, Naruto was enjoying the feeling of sand between his toes and longed to rush out to the ocean to take a dip, he hadn't brought a swimsuit but his undergarments should be enough to run out.

After finishing their breakfast Naruto slipped his dress off, he had on a plain black bra and grey shorts that clung to his body as he urged Shikamaru to come with him to take a dip. Shikamaru was distracted by Naruto that he didn't even protest. He was brought back to reality when Naruto pushed him into the cold water, giggling in his ear as the blonde jumped onto his back. Shikamaru easily threw Naruto off his shoulder and into the depths of the ocean.

Naruto came up shortly, pouting as his hair was now completely soaked in salt water. Shikamaru reached out and held onto his waist before dropping them back into the ocean. It was refreshing for Naruto whose body relaxed as floating beside Shikamaru. The Nara held onto his hand as they focused on each other. "Where do you want to go for our honeymoon?"

The question caught him off guard and the blonde looked over at Shikamaru who had his eyes closed, his hair tie lost in the struggle they had a moment ago. Naruto smiled. "You choose, show me what you want me to see."

Shikamaru smiled at the thought of showing his blonde the world. "Alright, that means the wedding is completely in your hands."

"I have no qualms, it will be a beautiful service," Naruto chuckled before climbing out of the sea, Shikamaru followed him closely back to their spot. Sand clung to their toes as they leaned against the car snuggled up. Shikamaru looked down at Naruto who clung to his arm and the blonde looked up at him. He kissed Naruto whose eyes widened before returning the favor. A quiet moans could be heard, Shikamaru tugging them from between Naruto's lush pink lips, that became bruised from his continued attack. He had the blonde leaning into him, bending his body to fit against Shikamaru so perfectly. It was enthralling, a seductive mood that made Shikamaru aroused at the prospect of making love to Naruto when the time came.

"I love you," Shikamaru murmured as they pulled back. Naruto was too speechless to speak but buried his face in the Nara's chest to show the same feeling. Shikamaru smiled and cradled his head.

Chapter 9

"Shika-mh!" Naruto was cut off by Shikamaru kissing him deeply while cheers were heard around them by their friends. The small wedding had gone off without a hitch and Shikamaru was thrilled with how beautiful Naruto looked walking down the small aisle. His wedding dress was modest but it left little for Shikamaru's imagination and even Naruto could feel it as Shikamaru possessed his lips.

[image]

When they pulled back, Naruto was pink around his ears, his tanned whiskers stretched wide in a smile that had Shikamaru melting at the fact that this was now his other half, his missing puzzle piece. Naruto cupped his cheeks and before he knew it they were kissing again, his hands wrapped around the tan male's waist and swept him off his feet and out of the chapel. Naruto was laughing in pure bliss as he was set down on the curb. They had to go on their honeymoon but not without their little soldier who was decked out in a little suit, he had kicked off his shoes in the middle of the ceremony but was gurgling for Naruto who kissed his cheek, leaving his lipstick impressions on the baby.

Shikadai was restless, with an endless smile on his face. He was such a cute baby for Naruto's heart and Shikamaru watching them made him realize he had done the right thing by marrying Naruto, for his son and his own sanity. Looking over at Naruto he felt at peace with dying for this blonde. He could return to the front lines knowing his baby would be safe with Naruto.

They took the overnight train to get to their honeymoon destination. Shikamaru could finally scent Naruto properly and sincerely, he suckled on the blonde's now-bitten gland while his omega purred at his advances. Naruto returned the favor and Shikamaru had never felt an omega suckling at his neck. It was

blinding how good it felt to feel Naruto's little pink tongue dragging across his gland. To have Naruto's scent embedded in him was an honor Shikamaru wouldn't take for granted.

Many nights were spent in the honeymoon hotel suite and while Naruto wanted to mate properly Shikamaru was still apprehensive. He wasn't a gentleman in the bedroom. He was a savage, often losing his mind after getting a whiff of slick from his desired partner. Naruto was delicate and sweet, he wouldn't want to hurt him in such an intimate act.

On their final night, however, Naruto wouldn't take no for an answer. "Don't you love me?" He asked as he started to tear up. Shikamaru looked offended at the comment.

"Of course, I love you Naruto, I love you so much."

"So why won't you touch me?" Naruto started crying. "Am I not good enough? Do you not find me attractive?"

Shikamaru pulled him into his lap. "Don't be ridiculous, you are extremely attractive. I'm just afraid you'll be hurt during our coupling. I'm not a gentle person Naruto, I lose my mind already just from getting your scent, to grasp your body, to have it pressed against me would make me unstable."

Naruto sniffled and dried his tears. "I don't care, I've had a rough upbringing I can handle it."

Shikamaru shook his head but if Naruto said he could handle it then he would give him it. "I have desires," As he said this his tone became rougher, his claws came out and his fangs grew in. Seeing this Naruto bared his neck, his tanned dainty neck that fitted Shikamaru's grip so easily.

"Show me those desires," Naruto purred, his hips moving to grind against Shikamaru's aroused cock. "Shika~"

"Strip."

It was said in an alpha tone and Naruto's body obeyed without question. The newly married Nara didn't waste any expense on his

lingerie. It was pure white, just like his wedding dress but was satin and lace in all the right parts. He was already soaking his lace panties with slickness from just being ordered but he was enthralled as Shikamaru got him on his knees, his back arching to give way to his clothed leaking hole.

Shikamaru roughly pushed his fingers inside his hole, no prep or warning, he dug inside him, searching for that spot that drove any omega wild. Naruto squealed, and a squirt of precum gushed from his cocklet as his prostate was found and abused. Shikamaru grabbed his shaking hips as he pulled his fingers out, he dragged the nails of his claws down Naruto's backside as he made a mess in their bed. Suddenly the alpha dragged his tongue up Naruto's crack the omega crying out as his rim was played with by the rough tongue before getting inside his walls. He gripped the sheets as his hips pushed back on Shikamaru's face to get more.

He couldn't keep his voice down, he was delirious about the pleasure that was fed to him, Shikamaru's claws now digging into his hips to draw blood. It was such a way to let him know that Shikamaru was an animal, scratching and marking property in such a barbaric manner. The blonde couldn't hold it in, his walls clinging to Shikamaru's tongue. "I'm gonna come," Naruto let out in a strained voice but he whimpered when Shikamaru grabbed his cock, pressing his thumb on the tip to keep him from release. "No! Shika please, no!" Naruto sobbed as his orgasm halted, his toes curled in on the sheets and his body went stiff.

He was rocking on the edge, riding Shikamaru's face while desperately bucking into his hand that wouldn't budge an inch. Naruto's eyes were glossy with tears as Shikamaru continued to torture him as he retreated his tongue and stood behind Naruto who was pressed into the bed. The blonde heard Shikamaru taking off his belt, the thumb on his cock circling its tip in a cruel way to make him spasm as the slick that had been slurped up by Shikamaru was now draining down his thighs.

"One last warning. Are you sure about this?" Shikamaru's voice was a forced calmness. Naruto looked behind him and nodded.

"Give me everything."

The response Shikamaru gave was to whip Naruto with his belt. The former Uzumaki cried out in surprise but it tapered off into a moan as his knees spread apart unconsciously, he looked back up at Shikamaru in a coy manner. Shikamaru felt his arousal climb from that simple look. He hit Naruto with the belt again, again and again. Each time the hit became more forceful and left red welts across his husband's skin, the blonde was only moaning in a broken voice, his tongue hung from his mouth, drooling onto the bed as his eyes leaked tears of pleasure as he pushed his ass into Shikamaru's direction.

"Please let me come, please Shikamaru," Naruto begged yet again and Shikamaru was done. He pulled his pants, his cock dropped out, his balls aching to offload inside his partner as his cock leaked his own precum. The musk of Shikamaru's package bathed the room and made Naruto mewl as he desired by his alpha. Shikamaru dropped the belt, grabbed the blonde's hips, and buried himself inside the blonde, shoving himself deep inside as he took his thumb off Naruto's cock. He smirked and forced Naruto to take him to the hilt, hitting his prostate which pushed the blonde into his first orgasm that made the former Uzumaki go blind as his vision painted white.

Naruto's arms gave out under him, his face pressed into the sheets, ass cocked in the air warming Shikamaru's cock. "I'm not done yet," Shikamaru leaned over him, his body caging Naruto in as his hands fondled his breasts. Shikamaru sucked on his scent gland, his cock throbbing as Naruto's walls clenched him, sucking him deeper inside his husband. Shikamaru growled as Naruto purred, he was transfixed on making a mess of him. He warned Naruto and he could now handle the consequences.

Chapter 10

"Come here my little bubble," Naruto cooed as Shikadai took his first steps, the baby was looking at his feet in confusion as they took steps towards Naruto who was encouraging him. He giggled before he rolled over into a pile of jelly. Naruto gave him a fond smile before picking him up. "You cheeky baby, you're being lazy."

Shikadai gave him a gummy smile before he wriggled away from Naruto and crawled into his playpen. The blonde locked it and got started on dinner as the doorbell rang. He quickly ran to the door to see that Ino had a care package for him. "What's this about?"

Ino looked tense. "You didn't hear did you?"

Naruto looked on confused.

"They've called for all soldiers to return to base. War is coming."

It fell on numb ears as Naruto's legs gave away under him as Ino dropped the package to catch him. He could feel it all again, the grim on his skin, the echo of bombs going off, being shoved onto the last train in the city to leave for the countryside. Watching the orphanage get bombed.

"Naruto," Ino's voice was faint in his ear as his vision blurred. "It's going to be okay, Shikamaru will guide you through this."

Ino tried to ease her scent in Naruto's surroundings but it was futile as the blonde's eyes rolled over before he went limp in her arms. Ino looked over at Shikadai who had begun to sob softly due to Naruto's sour scent lingering around them. She sighed turning Naruto into a recovery position and closing the door for privacy.

When Shikamaru returned that night with a heavy heart he found Ino at his dinner table still trying to console Shikadai while Naruto was passed out on the sofa. "You told him?"

"I'm so sorry, I thought you did and that's why I came down with a care package," She gestured to the unopened box on the counter. "I didn't think he would react this way."

"He was in the heart of the first war, so I wanted to approach it slowly. We have so much to discuss and preparations to be done," He caressed Naruto's cheek before taking his child from Ino's arms. Shikadai went quiet easily, he curled against his father who encased his son in a calming scent. "It's going to be fine Shikadai, we're going to survive this."

He pressed a kiss to Shikadai's cheek before going back to his wife who had also latched onto his scent, his breathing had slowed considerably to a normal pace and that eased Shikamaru to some extent. "You can head out Ino, I can take over here," Shikamaru patted his wife's cheek lightly and it seemed to work as Naruto moaned and pulled away from the hand.

"Alright, please tell Naruto I didn't mean to spring it on him," She clutched her pearls before heading back out to her home. Shikamaru sat on the ground beside the sofa and gathered the words he wanted to say. There wasn't a gentler way to say that he had to go to war again, that he might not make it back to their family.

Bombs were going to be dropped, he needed to move his family to the underground bunker. His parents didn't approve of their marriage so he knew they would never allow Naruto into the bunker, they would take Shikadai but not Naruto. His friends had small bunkers for their families and he couldn't ask them to house two more extra people. "I need to build our bunker. But where?"

He could possibly build under the home but would it be enough? He stared at Shikadai and Naruto's sleeping faces, he had to protect them and it was going to have to be enough. He called into his office and resigned from his position due to being drawn as one of the first sets to head back to the battlefield.

Chapter 11

It was bitter in the back of his throat. Naruto could feel the bile rise in his throat. He clutched Shikdai in his arms, his body curled into Shikamaru's. He could smell the gunpowder. Shikamaru had spent the night preparing his standard guns, sharpening his knives, checking his grenades, and packing other small essentials. Shikamaru held him tightly, and the train approaching in the distance made the atmosphere darker for everyone around. They weren't the only ones on the platform but they were the smallest family. Shikamaru's parents refused to see him off but the Nara could care less. All he needed was right here, these two were his driving force to face the frontline with a brave face, storm the enemy and make it out alive to continue living his life.

He could still feel the weight of Naruto's precious item around his neck. The darling blonde had gifted it to him as a keepsake, it was from his godmother and the crystal was beautiful. He promised to guard it with his life. "It's supposed to have healing properties and protects the wearer. I know it may be silly but knowing you have this eases a bit of apprehension. Many times when I have felt cornered I grab for this item. I hope you do the same and remember Shikadai and me in any dark moments."

Shikamaru kissed his blonde gently, the sound of the train becoming louder. "Promise you'll keep yourself and our son safe."

"I will, I promise."

The train sounded the call for all the soldiers to get on. They pried themselves from their family, and the sounds of wailing from baby to old were heard. Naruto stood still, his clothes in neat and perfect order, holding Shikadai who was crying louder as the situation dawned on him that his father was leaving for a long time. Shikamaru stood by the door and as they closed he finally saw Naruto break. He clutched his dress, wrinkling it and the tears slipped down his face rapidly as he started wailing. Shikamaru wanted more than anything to run off that train, hide with his

family in the bunker, and be branded a coward. He was a coward who loved his family dearly.

But he was taken aback when Naruto clutched his stomach. It dawned on him as the train started to take off. The reason Naruto's scent seemed to be changing. His wife was pregnant and he was heading to war.

His alpha screamed at him to fight his way off this train, to get back to his omega who had been left in a very vulnerable situation. He cursed Naruto softly in his mind as the action hadn't been down to tell him on purpose. Naruto knew better than to do something like that, had he opened his mouth any time before the doors had closed Naruto knew Shikamaru would forsake his duties. 'Such a dutiful wife, you stupid troublesome wife,' He thought as he clutched his military medals. He scowled deeply but vowed he would make it back to his wife, no matter the cost he couldn't die for this country, he wouldn't, he refused.

He had a family to come back to, a home he wanted to see again. He sighed as he settled down for the long journey ahead.

Naruto stood on the platform for a long moment, rubbing his tender stomach while soothing Shikadai. "Don't worry Shikadai, he'll be back home soon enough. He won't die out there. Baa-chan please protect him. I already lost you please protect my husband."

He headed home with heavy steps, closing the door and settling Shikadai down for a nap as he opened the trap door that showed a metal hatch. He opened the hatch and looked in on the room Shikamaru had built for them. It was practically a one-bedroom apartment but it lacked colors. He looked around slowly before lifting his head and closing back the doors. He turned on the television, he didn't particularly care for the electric build, he would be damned if he didn't hear the news. He knew for a fact that the first set on the front line usually died, very few made it out alive.

He prayed.

He hadn't prayed to Kami in a long time. His life has always been terrible, filled with spite and deliberate takedowns. He firmly

believed Kami-sama despised him. But he prayed, he didn't want Shikamaru to be taken from him. He was the first good thing in his life, he brightened it despite being a bit cynical. He loved him dearly.

'Don't take it him away, please.'

Chapter 12

On the frontline of the war, amidst the chaos and danger, Shikamaru found solace in a rare moment of respite. He sat alone in his tent, weary and battle-worn, his mind burdened with the weight of his responsibilities. His thoughts were consumed by the war, the strategies, and the lives at stake. It was in this moment that a familiar messenger arrived, bearing a letter and a care package.

Shikamaru's heart skipped a beat as he recognized Naruto's handwriting on the envelope. With a mix of anticipation and apprehension, he carefully opened the letter. As he read Naruto's words, a wave of relief washed over him, knowing that his beloved husband and their toddler son, Shikadai, were safe.

But as he delved deeper into the letter, Shikamaru's emotions surged. Naruto confessed to hiding his pregnancy, knowing all too well that Shikamaru would forsake his duty as a soldier to come home and protect their growing family. Tears welled in Shikamaru's eyes as he realized the sacrifices Naruto had made for him and their children.

Naruto's heartfelt plea resonated deeply within Shikamaru's soul. The longing to be by his family's side was overwhelming, his devotion to them surpassing any duty he had as a soldier. A smile tugged at his lips as he glanced at the care package that accompanied the letter, filled with his favorite foods and small tokens of love.

Determined to let Naruto know his unwavering commitment, Shikamaru sat down, pen in hand, and began to write his response. His words carried the weight of his love and his promise. He reassured Naruto that he would return home, no matter what obstacles lay before him, and he would do everything in his power to keep their family safe.

As he penned his letter, memories flooded Shikamaru's mind—moments of laughter, shared dreams, and the unbreakable bond

they had forged. He reminisced about the first time he held Shikadai, the overwhelming sense of responsibility and love that had washed over him. Now, with their unborn child on the way, the magnitude of their family's love grew exponentially.

In his letter, Shikamaru made Naruto promise to take care of himself and their children. He knew that Naruto's fierce determination and indomitable spirit would carry them through the challenges they faced. But he also recognized the weight that rested on Naruto's shoulders, and he wanted to ease that burden as much as he could from the frontlines of the war.

Shikamaru's words were filled with tenderness and a longing for their reunion. He described the dreams they would fulfill, the adventures they would embark on once the war was over. He painted a picture of a future bathed in happiness, where they would watch their children grow, love, and thrive.

With each stroke of the pen, Shikamaru poured his heart onto the page, his words carrying a promise of unwavering dedication. He sealed the letter with a kiss, a tangible manifestation of his love for Naruto and their family. As he set the pen down, he felt a renewed sense of purpose and determination, ready to face the challenges of the war with renewed strength.

The letter and the care package became Shikamaru's source of strength, reminding him of the love that awaited him at home. Though the war would test his mettle, he held fast to the belief that their reunion would be a beacon of light amidst the darkness.

As he folded the letter and placed it close to his heart, Shikamaru whispered a promise into the air. A promise to return home, to Naruto and their children. No matter the injuries, no matter the obstacles, he would find his way back to them, for they were the guiding force that fueled his every step.

With newfound determination, Shikamaru rose from his seat, ready to face the challenges ahead. The war raged on, but his heart was anchored to the love he held for his family. They were his North Star, his reason for fighting.

As he stepped out of the tent, the weight of the world on his shoulders, Shikamaru carried with him the unwavering love of Naruto and their children. And with that love, he would navigate the treacherous path of war, always keeping the promise he made in his heart—to come home, to be by their side, and to keep them safe.

Chapter 13

In the midst of the chaotic battlefield, Shikamaru lay wounded, his body battered by the explosion of a grenade. Pain seared through his leg, and his thoughts began to drift away from the battlefield and into memories of his loved ones. As the sounds of war continued to rage around him, his mind traveled back to a different time, a time of happiness and family.

He thought of his son, Shikadai, a bright and curious toddler who always managed to bring a smile to his face. The image of Shikadai playing in their home, his laughter echoing through the rooms, offered a brief respite from the agony he was experiencing.

His thoughts then turned to Naruto, his husband, and a rush of warmth enveloped him. He remembered the day they exchanged vows, promising to stand by each other in sickness and in health. Naruto's unwavering support had been a constant pillar of strength for him, especially during his deployment.

But as he lay there, his body broken and his leg mangled, a sense of insecurity crept into his heart. He recalled a painful chapter from his past when Temari had left him and Shikadai during the aftermath of the first war. At the time, she couldn't understand the weight of his suffering, the invisible scars of PTSD that he carried. The memory brought a pang of vulnerability - the fear of abandonment, of being left behind once more.

Tears welled up in his eyes, mixing with the dirt and blood on his face. Not for the loss of his leg, but for the fear that he might lose Naruto too. He clutched the necklace Naruto had given him for protection, holding it tightly as if seeking solace from the connection it represented.

In his heart, he replayed the heartfelt letter Naruto had sent him seven months ago, a lifeline that had kept him going through the trials of war. Naruto's words echoed in his mind, assuring him that he could come back in any condition and that their love was

stronger than the challenges they faced.

As he was carried behind the front and prepared for surgery, Shikamaru's thoughts remained entwined with his hopes for the future. He prayed that Naruto would still love him, that their bond was unbreakable, and that the vows they had exchanged would hold true even in the face of his new disability.

The sounds of the battlefield began to fade as he was wheeled into the makeshift operating room. Amidst the chaos, Shikamaru held onto the memories of his family, his son's laughter, his growing unborn child, Naruto's unwavering love, and the promise of a future where they would overcome whatever challenges came their way.

The sterile room seemed to hold its breath as Shikamaru continued to process the reality of his amputation. He fought to hold back tears, not out of shame or self-pity, but from the overwhelming rush of emotions that threatened to engulf him. The nurse's presence was a mere backdrop to his thoughts, and as she spoke about his discharge, he hardly registered her words.

As the nurse left the room, Shikamaru's gaze lingered on the papers she had left behind. Discharge papers that marked the end of his time on the front lines, the end of an era that had shaped him in ways he couldn't yet fully fathom. He wiped away a tear that had escaped his control, his emotions betraying the stoicism he often displayed.

The phantom pain was both a cruel reminder and a testament to the resilience of his body. He could feel the echo of his missing leg, a sensation that was as disconcerting as it was painful. The sobs that escaped him were quiet, a raw release of the turmoil he felt within.

As he lay there, thoughts of his family brought a bittersweet smile to his lips. Naruto, his husband, was likely to be back at their home with their toddler son, Shikadai. And Naruto, still recovering from a recent bout of illness, shouldn't be burdened with the task of picking him up from the station. Shikamaru decided that he would surprise him, despite the circumstances.

Seven months pregnant, Naruto had been his anchor during the

darkest days of battle. The image of Naruto's face, the love and strength that radiated from him, fueled Shikamaru's determination to return home and be the partner and father they both deserved.

With a trembling hand, he reached for the discharge papers and read the official designation next to his name—Field Marshal Nara Shikamaru. The rank was a testament to his dedication and strategic brilliance, accomplishments that he had achieved even while grappling with the horrors of war.

He allowed himself a moment of pride, not for the rank itself, but for the camaraderie he had shared with his fellow soldiers during the rare moments of respite. Men who had laughed and fought alongside him, who had trusted him with their lives. The weight of their absence hung heavy in his heart, a reminder of the sacrifices made on the path to survival.

Guilt gnawed at him, the kind that survivors often felt—the guilt of being alive when others had fallen. But intertwined with that guilt was gratitude. Gratitude that he had made it back to his family, to the arms of the man he loved.

He traced his fingers over the paper, his gaze focusing on the mention of a prosthetic leg. It was a glimmer of hope, a promise of mobility and independence in the face of his new reality. While the road ahead was uncertain, he held onto the prospect of adapting and overcoming.

As the weight of his emotions began to ebb, Shikamaru's resolve solidified. He wiped away his tears, a wry smile tugging at his lips. He was no longer on the front lines, but he was stepping onto a new battlefield—one of recovery, adaptation, and building a future for himself, Naruto, and their growing family.

Chapter 14

The journey back home was a whirlwind of emotions for Shikamaru. His return to Japan marked the end of a long and grueling chapter in his life, one defined by the trials of war and the loss of a part of himself. But it also signaled the beginning of a new chapter, one filled with the promise of reuniting with his beloved family.

Once back in Japan, Shikamaru was immediately whisked away to receive more extensive medical treatment and rehabilitation. The skilled medical staff worked tirelessly to ensure his recovery and equipped him with a prosthetic leg for everyday walking, as well as another specialized for physical activities, allowing him to regain a level of mobility that was crucial for his transition back to civilian life.

Through the weeks of therapy and adjustment to his prosthetic limbs, Shikamaru remained steadfast in his decision to keep his return a secret from his friends and, most importantly, from his beloved Naruto. He had his reasons, driven by a mix of emotions—fear of burdening Naruto, insecurity about his changed body, and a profound desire to surprise his family with his return. He knew that Naruto, seven months pregnant when he left for his deployment, was already carrying a heavy load.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity of recovery and preparation, the day of his departure from the medical facility arrived. Shikamaru stood on the platform, a mixture of nervousness and excitement coursing through him. His bags were slung over his shoulder, a physical reminder of the life he was leaving behind—a life of military discipline, camaraderie, and the constant looming threat of danger.

The crutches provided him with much-needed support as he began the journey up the small hill that led to their modest home. The familiar surroundings and the gentle rustle of leaves in the breeze were a comforting welcome. But it was the sight of Naruto in the

garden, tending to the plants, that brought warmth to his heart.

Golden hair glinted in the sunlight, and Shikamaru could hear the distant babbling of their son, Shikadai. Naruto's gentle encouragements floated on the wind. It was a scene of domestic serenity, a snapshot of the life Shikamaru had been yearning to return to.

As he approached the wooden gate, his heart pounding, he couldn't help but smile. Naruto had yet to notice his presence, too engrossed in his gardening. Shikamaru's hand rose, and he knocked softly, a sheepish grin playing on his lips.

Naruto turned, his expression transitioning from mild annoyance at the interruption to pure shock. His beautiful blue eyes widened as they locked onto Shikamaru. And then, as the realization dawned, tears began to flow uncontrollably down his cheeks.

Shikamaru waved awkwardly, his own eyes shimmering with emotions he had kept hidden for so long. Naruto waddled over as quickly as he could, the swell of his pregnant belly a testament to the time that had passed since Shikamaru left.

Their reunion was nothing short of emotional chaos. Naruto's tears flowed freely as he threw himself into Shikamaru's arms, burying his face in Shikamaru's chest. Shikamaru's own tears mingled with Naruto's as he hugged his beloved omega, the familiar scent and warmth of his husband enveloping him like a lifeline.

"I'm so sorry, Naruto," Shikamaru whispered between sobs, his voice choked with guilt and gratitude.

Naruto shushed him gently, pulling back just enough to look into Shikamaru's eyes. "Don't apologize," he said, his voice trembling. "I'm just... I'm just glad you're back. That you're alive."

Their eyes locked in a silent exchange, conveying emotions too deep for words. In that moment, Shikamaru realized that his fears of being abandoned had been unfounded. Naruto's love was unwavering, his commitment resolute.

Naruto continued, his voice quivering but filled with conviction, "I don't care if you came back broken, missing limbs, or even blind or deaf. I just wanted you to come home—for me, for Shikadai, for our unborn child."

Shikamaru's heart swelled with a mixture of relief and love. Naruto had always been his source of strength, and this moment was no different. As Naruto helped him into their home, Shikamaru couldn't help but think about how fortunate he was to have such an understanding and loving partner.

He settled at the dinner table, the familiar surroundings providing a sense of grounding and normalcy he had missed dearly. Naruto, in his nurturing way, went about the familiar routine of preparing a meal, a gesture that spoke of love and homecoming.

With a smile, Shikamaru reached for the phone on the wall. It was time to let his friends know that he had returned safely from the frontlines. He explained that he needed some time to reintegrate into civilian life, to reconnect with his family, and to rebuild the life he had temporarily left behind.

His friends, understanding and supportive as ever, assured him that they would catch up soon. They all echoed the sentiment that mattered most to him: they were happy he was back, safe and sound.

As he hung up the phone and watched Shikadai's innocent smile, Shikamaru couldn't help but feel a profound sense of completion. He had come back to what truly mattered in life—his family, his love, and a future that held both challenges and joys he was more than ready to face.

The weeks and months ahead would bring their own trials and adjustments, but Shikamaru knew that with Naruto by his side, and their children soon to join them, they could overcome anything. And as he looked at Naruto, who was already heating up dinner and setting a spread on the table, Shikamaru couldn't help but feel the deep alpha within him howl in contentment. He was home, where he belonged, with his adorable omega Naruto, and the love between them was stronger than ever.

Chapter 15

As the due date for Naruto's pregnancy drew closer, Shikamaru and Naruto were filled with a mixture of excitement and anticipation. They had eagerly been preparing for the arrival of their second child, and today, they had decided to work on a special project together - building a baby basket to place beside their bed.

It was a sunny afternoon, and the soft glow of sunlight filled their cozy home. Shikadai, their firstborn, was taking a nap on the sofa, his small frame tucked into a peaceful slumber. Naruto, in his third trimester of pregnancy, was in the kitchen, preparing some refreshing lemonade. The scent of citrus wafted through the air, carrying with it a sense of comfort and home.

Shikamaru had gathered the materials they needed for the baby basket - a sturdy wooden frame, soft and plush bedding, and a delicate canopy to shield their newborn from light and drafts. He had also chosen a soothing color scheme of pale blues and soft yellows, wanting to create a peaceful and welcoming space for their baby.

He spread out the materials on the dining table and looked over at Naruto, who was carefully squeezing lemons to extract the fresh juice. Naruto's face was bathed in the warm glow of sunlight streaming through the window, accentuating his golden hair and the subtle curve of his baby bump. Shikamaru couldn't help but smile as he watched him work.

"Need any help with that, Naruto?" Shikamaru called out, wanting to be sure his husband wasn't overexerting himself.

Naruto looked over and smiled, wiping his hands on a kitchen towel. "I'm good, Shika. Just a few more lemons to go."

Shikamaru nodded and returned his attention to the baby basket project. He began assembling the wooden frame, his skilled hands working with precision. As he worked, he couldn't help but reflect

on how their lives had changed since Shikamaru's return from the frontlines.

The initial anxiety and uncertainty about how Naruto would react to his amputation had faded away, replaced by a deep and abiding love. Naruto had been his unwavering support throughout his recovery, and Shikamaru had come to realize that their bond was unbreakable.

Soon, the baby basket began to take shape. Shikamaru carefully attached the bedding, ensuring it was soft and comfortable. He draped the delicate canopy over the top, allowing it to hang gracefully and create a cozy nook for their newborn.

Naruto, having finished squeezing the lemons, walked over to join Shikamaru at the table. He placed a glass of lemonade in front of Shikamaru and sat down beside him, observing the progress of their project.

"It's looking beautiful, Shika," Naruto remarked, his blue eyes filled with admiration. "Our baby is going to love it."

Shikamaru took a sip of the lemonade, relishing the refreshing taste. "I hope so. It's important to me that our home is a warm and welcoming place for our growing family."

Naruto reached over and placed a hand on Shikamaru's, their fingers entwining. "You've done an amazing job with this, just like you always do. You're going to be an incredible father again."

Shikamaru couldn't help but blush at Naruto's words. He knew he had his flaws and insecurities, but Naruto's unwavering faith in him was a constant source of strength.

As they continued to work on the baby basket, they talked about their hopes and dreams for their expanding family. Naruto shared his excitement about becoming a mother, and Shikamaru reassured him that he would always be loved and cherished.

With the baby basket finally complete, they carefully moved it to the bedroom, placing it beside their bed. It looked like a haven of

comfort and security, ready to cradle their new arrival.

As evening approached, Shikadai began to stir from his nap on the sofa. Naruto went over to gently wake him, and the three of them gathered in the bedroom, admiring their handiwork.

Naruto placed a gentle hand on Shikamaru's shoulder, pulling his attention away from the baby basket. He could sense the weight of something troubling his husband, a tension that had been building throughout the day.

"Shika," Naruto began softly, concern in his voice, "Is there something on your mind? You've been distant since we started working on the baby basket."

Shikamaru sighed, his shoulders sagging as he wrestled with his thoughts. He had tried to push it aside, to focus on the joy of the moment, but the memories had resurfaced, as they often did when he least expected them.

"It's... it's the grenade attack," Shikamaru admitted, his voice barely above a whisper. He felt a lump forming in his throat, and his hands trembled.

Naruto's brows furrowed with worry, and he moved closer to his husband. "Shika, you don't have to hold it in. Please, talk to me. I'm here for you."

Tears welled up in Shikamaru's eyes as he struggled to find the words. The memories were vivid, like a nightmare that played on an endless loop in his mind. He had been trained to remain calm in the face of danger, but no amount of training could erase the trauma of that moment.

"It was so sudden," he finally began, his voice quivering. "The explosion... the pain. I thought I was going to die, Naruto."

Naruto's heart ached for his husband as he listened. He had seen Shikamaru go through moments like this before, but each time, it was a painful reminder of the scars that war had left on his soul.

"I'm here with you now, Shika," Naruto said, his voice gentle and

soothing. "You're safe, and you're not alone."

Shikamaru nodded, struggling to hold back the flood of emotions that threatened to overwhelm him. But it was no use. The memories came rushing back, the sights and sounds of the battlefield, the sensation of his leg being torn apart by the explosion.

Naruto moved closer, wrapping his arms around Shikamaru in a comforting embrace. Shikadai, sensing the tension in the room, crawled onto the bed and nestled between his parents, as if offering his own form of comfort.

Shikamaru buried his face in Naruto's shoulder, his body trembling with the weight of his emotions. Naruto held him tightly, whispering words of reassurance and love.

"Shika, it's okay to feel this way," Naruto murmured. "You're strong, and you've been through so much. But you don't have to carry it all on your own."

The dam finally broke, and Shikamaru began to sob. It was a raw and cathartic release of the pain and fear that he had been holding inside. Naruto continued to hold him, his own tears mingling with Shikamaru's.

The minutes turned into hours as Shikamaru poured out his heart, recounting the horrors of war, the loss of friends, and the trauma that had haunted his nightmares. Naruto listened without judgment, offering his unwavering support and understanding.

As the night wore on, Shikamaru's tears began to subside. The weight on his chest felt lighter, as if he had finally released the burden that had been crushing him. He looked into Naruto's eyes, gratitude and love filling his gaze.

"I don't know what I would do without you, Naruto," Shikamaru whispered, his voice hoarse from crying.

Naruto smiled softly, brushing a strand of hair away from Shikamaru's face. "And I don't know what I would do without you. We face our demons together, remember? Always."

With Naruto's support, Shikamaru began to regain his composure. He knew that the path to healing would be long and challenging, but he also knew that he had the love and strength of his family to guide him.

As the night grew quieter, Shikamaru, Naruto, and Shikadai lay in their bed, wrapped in each other's arms. The baby basket stood beside them, a symbol of hope and new beginnings.

Chapter 16

As the night wore on, the atmosphere in their home shifted from the quiet aftermath of shared emotions to the imminent arrival of a new life. Naruto, having gone through the ups and downs of pregnancy, now found himself in the throes of labor pains.

Shikamaru, having found solace in the shared vulnerability of the evening, stood by Naruto's side, holding his hand tightly. The room was dimly lit, a serene ambiance created by a soft lamp in the corner. The baby basket they had crafted together stood as a silent witness to the imminent arrival.

Naruto's face contorted with pain as another contraction hit. He squeezed Shikamaru's hand, the only anchor in the midst of the intense waves of sensation. Beads of sweat formed on Naruto's forehead as he panted, breathing through the pain.

"Shika," Naruto managed to say between breaths, "I can do this. We can do this."

Shikamaru, though feeling a mix of excitement and anxiety, nodded with determination. "We're in this together, Naruto. Just breathe. I'm right here with you."

As the contractions continued, the room filled with the sounds of Naruto's controlled breathing and the occasional murmurs of encouragement from Shikamaru. The midwife, a calm and experienced presence, monitored the progression of labor, providing gentle guidance when needed.

Shikadai, who had been roused from his sleep by the unfolding events, sat on a chair in the corner, his eyes wide with a mix of curiosity and concern. Naruto managed a weak smile for his son between contractions, reassurance passing silently between them.

Hours passed, each moment bringing them closer to the much-

anticipated arrival. The air was charged with a sense of anticipation, the room echoing with the quiet determination of a family about to welcome a new member.

Finally, the moment arrived. Naruto, with beads of perspiration on his forehead, drew in a deep breath as a particularly intense contraction surged through him. Shikamaru held on, his grip unwavering.

With a final, powerful push, Naruto's face transformed from pain to relief and joy as the midwife gently placed their newborn son into Naruto's arms. The room seemed to hold its breath for a moment, capturing the beauty of a new life entering the world.

Shikadai's eyes widened as he looked at his baby brother for the first time, a mixture of awe and curiosity in his gaze. Shikamaru, his eyes reflecting a blend of exhaustion and elation, leaned in to press a tender kiss on Naruto's forehead.

"He's perfect, Naruto," Shikamaru whispered, his voice filled with emotion.

Naruto, tears of joy streaming down his face, cradled their son close. The tiny, wriggling bundle seemed to encapsulate all the hopes and dreams they had for their growing family. The midwife quickly performed her duties to ensure Naruto wouldn't face complications during the healing process and even left some recipes on what to cook to help the body recover. Shikamaru got together the bloody towels, bedsheets, and other items and planned to burn them the morning as he wanted to stick by Naruto who was currently bedridden.

"Do you need anything?" Shikamaru kneeled by Naruto's side of the bed.

"Anything?" Naruto asked weakly.

"Darling just give the desire," Shikamaru murmured softly. He ran his fingers through damn golden locks as Naruto giggled softly.

"I would really like some of the dinner we had earlier," Naruto's

eyes were droopy. "You made curry, it was so delicious."

Shikamaru smiled and kissed his cheek and scooped up Shikadai who was already nodding off again. When the door closed Naruto gazed down at his son, they had already chosen a name for their child. Boruto. Shikamaru had suggested it due to the fact that he and Shikadai had the starting 'Shika'. Naruto had contemplated it and he found the name adorable so they settled on it. Boruto had his blonde hair and blue eyes with whiskers but he could see Boruto had Shikamaru's slanted gaze.

He slept peacefully in Naruto's arms and the older blonde imprinted his scent on Boruto to lull him into a deep sleep. He waited in bliss for Shikamaru to come back with the bowl of reheated curry and some quickly made seaweed soup. Shikamaru fed both dishes to the blonde, his scent curling around both the new mother and child and when Naruto had fallen asleep Shikamaru lifted Boruto out of Naruto's hand to hold his child until dawn.

In the morning while everyone was asleep Shikamaru burned the bloody cloths and started breakfast while pulling out some of the milk Naruto had pumped in advance for the baby and set it to warm. After he set up breakfast in bed he entered Shikadai's room to see his son still asleep. Shikamaru chuckled softly washed his son up and let him into the room where breakfast and a warm bottle were waiting to be consumed. Boruto had woken up and started gurgling. He seemed to be an active child with how he was wriggling around in his basket.

"Come here, baby," Shikamaru cooed as Boruto happily took to the bottle, his eyes curiously looking at Shikadai who was dipping bread slices into the porridge. Shikadai munched on his porridge-soaked bread slice while gazing back at Boruto. Shikamaru wondered what dynamic they would share.

Chapter 17

The day he had transitioned from the warm glow of the afternoon to the subdued hues of twilight in their rural town. The aroma of a home-cooked dinner wafted through the cozy kitchen, where Naruto stood by the stove, preparing a meal for his family. The sizzle of vegetables and the rich scent of spices filled the air, creating a comforting backdrop to the domestic scene.

As he stirred the pot, Naruto glanced over at the playpen in the corner of the room. Shikamaru, their son Shikadai, and their newborn baby boy were engaged in playful antics. Shikadai's laughter echoed in the room, a joyful sound that warmed Naruto's heart.

It was moments like these that made Naruto reflect on the twists of fate that had brought him to this idyllic life. Shikamaru's ad, a simple yet heartfelt plea for companionship, had spoken to Naruto on a profound level. The words had resonated with him in a way that nothing else had, and in that moment, he had decided to take a leap of faith. Little did he know that this leap would bring him to a small, welcoming town and into the arms of Shikamaru.

Naruto sighed, a mixture of gratitude and nostalgia filling him. He could still vividly recall the day he arrived in the town, the quaint buildings, and the welcoming atmosphere that had drawn him in. Shikamaru's home had been a small yet cozy place, and even then, there was a warmth that went beyond the physical confines of the house.

The transition from solitude to family had been gradual but profound. Shikamaru, with his calm demeanor and thoughtful gestures, had been a steady presence. From the simple joys of shared meals to the laughter that now filled their home, Naruto had found a sense of belonging he hadn't dared to hope for.

As the pot simmered on the stove, Naruto allowed his mind to drift back to the early days of their relationship. Shikamaru, reserved but

caring, had opened his heart to Naruto, and Naruto, in turn, had found solace in the quiet strength of the man who would become his husband.

The war had been a dark cloud that had loomed over their lives. Shikamaru's deployment had brought its share of anxieties and sleepless nights, but Naruto had held onto the promise embedded in the letters they exchanged. Shikamaru's words had been a lifeline, a source of strength that kept Naruto going during the long months of separation.

The day Shikamaru had returned, forever changed by the scars of battle, Naruto's heart had swelled with a mixture of relief and love. The missing leg was inconsequential compared to the fact that Shikamaru had come back, alive and breathing. Their reunion had been a testament to the endurance of their connection, a love that transcended physical imperfections.

The cries of their newborn baby brought Naruto back to the present. He smiled as he glanced over at Shikamaru, who was cradling their son in his arms. Shikadai, full of boundless energy, was now attempting to stack building blocks, a miniature version of his father's strategic mind at work.

As Naruto continued to cook, he marveled at the life they had built together. The rural town, once unfamiliar, had become a place filled with memories and shared experiences. The community had embraced them, and Naruto was surrounded by a network of friends and neighbors who had become like family.

The dinner preparations continued, and soon, the table was set with steaming bowls of food. Naruto called out to Shikamaru and the kids, inviting them to the table. The clatter of tiny footsteps and Shikadai's excited chatter filled the room as they gathered for the evening meal.

As they sat around the table, a sense of gratitude settled over Naruto. He looked at Shikamaru, who met his gaze with a soft smile. In that exchange of glances, there was an unspoken acknowledgment of the journey they had taken together—the hardships, the joys, and the love that had blossomed against all

odds.

The evening unfolded in a comfortable rhythm. Shikamaru, with Shikadai in his lap, shared stories of the day's adventures, while Naruto tended to the baby. The room echoed with the laughter and babble of their children, creating a symphony of domestic bliss.

After dinner, as they settled into the living room, Naruto cradled the baby in his arms. Shikamaru, with Shikadai nestled against his chest, looked at Naruto with a fondness that needed no words. The children played with their toys, creating a backdrop of innocence and joy.

Naruto sighed contentedly. "Who would have thought, when I answered that ad, that we would end up here?"

Shikamaru chuckled, a sound that resonated with warmth. "Life's funny that way. We take a chance, and sometimes, it leads us to exactly where we're meant to be."

The night wore on, the soft glow of the moon casting a gentle light on their little family. In the quiet moments between laughter and play, Naruto found himself grateful for the ad that had saved him from the precipice of despair. More than that, he was grateful for Shikamaru, the man who had become his anchor, partner, and life's love.

A/N- That does it for Letter Bride. Ah, it's so cute to write a fluffy ShikaNaru. I admit, that I am twisted on my main but I'm trying. I don't know which draft will grace this account yet but I promise to complete it, just have to flip through my files.

Also, I re-uploaded Nara Oneshots! Taking a risk but can't keep stuttering on that end. I'm almost finished in uploading all the chapters that were there before the strike then we can move on to taking requests again. So look out for when I post the thread back on my main profile.

Love you all!